

Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary

Summer has wound down and we are still keeping busy at OJJ, as evidenced by all the news and notes in this issue. Although it's officially almost autumn, it still *feels* like summer.

As ever, people throughout OJJ's world are always on the go, and I'm always impressed with the number of activities that go on. Work-related or personal, it seems that our staff is always working to help others and make the world a little better for those around them. It makes me feel good to know that I work daily with people who truly care about one another and the youth in their care.

Throughout this issue are also stories about our youth and their successes. That's what we're all about – helping our kids learn to make healthy decisions and become the best they can be. Surely there is no greater calling. I am so proud that we can truly say that this agency meets our mission every day and everywhere.

OJJ is on the move, and it's all about our people. That would be you.

“Doc”

Dr. Mary L. Livers

The Daily Motivator

Choose your dreams

Any choice you make is a turn your life takes in one direction or another. Getting where you want to go is a matter of making each and every choice with that in mind.

Letting go of a negative, destructive habit happens by making one positive, empowering choice at a time. Creating a desired achievement comes about in the same way, one intentional, effective choice at a time.

Every choice matters, and every choice either changes or reaffirms a particular direction. That is what gives you great control over the way your life unfolds.

If it is opportunity you seek, stop looking for it and start paying more attention to the choices you make. Every one of them is a real, practical and influential opportunity for you to move toward your most desired outcomes.

In every minute, in any situation, you can continue bringing your most treasured dreams to life through the choices you make. As time moves forward, great and meaningful value arises from choices intentionally made in a consistent direction.

In matters large, small, and in between, there are always choices to be made. Make the choice, each chance you get, to choose your dreams.

— Ralph Marston

Staff Spotlight

Spotlight on...



PPS Margo Corulla, Tallulah Regional Office

PPS Margo Corulla has been with OJJ since May 1995, and although she enjoyed a lengthy career as a private sector bookkeeper, she said she can't imagine a better job than working with young people.

Margo began working for the state of Louisiana later in life, after working in business for many years. Margo had really enjoyed her work, and as a single person with grown children, she wasn't ready to stay home. While looking for something interesting to do, she found a whole new career. First, she accepted a contract position with the Delta Community Action Agency. From there she moved to working in child support enforcement, as an accounting clerk accepting child support payments. She moved up to case worker assistant, then promoted to an officer position.

Margo's sister, Frances Kennedy, (now retired) served Tallulah OJJ for over 30 years. "Over the years, Frances would talk about her experiences, and it sounded interesting," Margo said. "I had worked with young children at church, and I like helping kids. When Frances told me there was an opening, I applied for it and I lucked up – I got the job." The rest is history. Margo came on board as a Juvenile Services Officer (JSO), and today, still on the job, she is a Probation and Parole Supervisor.

“Margo is the one I can always go to for extra duties and know the request will be accepted with a smile and enthusiasm,” said **Regional Manager Ruth Stephens**. “She is a “take charge” person who leaves nothing to chance. Not only does this office utilize her expertise, but offices across the entire state know they can depend on her for assistance. She is one of a kind. I am so very pleased to have this opportunity to recognize her.”

“We work together for the best approach for the youth. You have to look at the whole picture, and see what the right placement is for each youth.”

As a JSO, Margo supervised kids in East Carroll, Madison and Tensas Parishes. She already knew the area and the local judges, because that was the same region where she worked as a child support officer. She was also very involved in placement. Today, she supervises PPOs in the same district. Of course, over the years, there have been changes in the judiciary, but she still gets calls from judges that she has worked with for many years. “We work together for the best approach for the youth,” Margo said. “We have known each other for a long time, and many of them are willing to take our suggestions. You have to look at the whole picture, and see what the right placement is for each youth.”

These days, Margo still travels her district occasionally, but she prefers to stay in the office more. “When you are out of the office, you worry about what is on your desk there,” she said. “When you are in the office, you worry about what’s going on in the field.”

“Nothing is stopping me from doing the job I want to do,” Margo said. “Miss Ruth is very inspiring – she is like the Energizer Bunny. As long as she keeps going, I will keep going with her.”

“I love working with such good people, and I work with great officers,” Margo continued.

“They don’t think twice about dropping what they are doing to help one another. With such good officers here, who are well educated in their job duties and willing to help one another, we have fun times and busy times. We can stop and laugh, and compare notes every so often.”

“We also get the guidance and cooperation we need from central office staff to make everything work,” Margo said.

Margo spends much of her free time with family. She is the proud grandmother of grandson Hunter and granddaughter Evelyn Grace, whose mother, Margo’s daughter Tori, works for adult Probation & Parole. Son Vince is graphic designer and manager of Signs First.

Known throughout OJJ as the Tabasco Woman, Margo’s office is decorated to the max with memorabilia and hot sauce. It’s just one of her many interests. She enjoys working with her church, scrapbooking, shopping for antiques and travel. And Tabasco.

Travel is a passion, and Margo has logged many travel miles, visiting with family and friends, and sightseeing all over the country. She has visited most of the eastern U.S, the southern states, California, Colorado, and most memorably, Alaska.

But mostly, Margo enjoys her work. Her great attitude and years of expertise combine into a powerful force that works daily to meet the mission.



SCY program Manager Jan James’ backyard pond, created by her nephew Thomas Hayward.

CQIS POLICY UPDATES

Policies approved in July:

- A.2.1 Employee Manual
- A.2.6 Requirement of Physician's Certification for Sick Leave Usage
- A.2.37 Separation for Unscheduled Absences
- A.3.2 Travel
- A.6.5 Utilization of Youth as Domestic Help Prohibited
- A.7.2 Freon Recovery – Certification of Technicians and Recovery Equipment
- B.2.3 Secure Care Direct Admission
- B.7.1 Educational Policy
- C.2.8 Youth Visitation in Secure Facilities
- C.2.9 Correspondence and Packages

Rescinded:

- B.8.2 Personal Grooming and/or Group Identification of Youth

Success Stories

Thibodaux Regional Office

P&P Week Observed

Thibodaux OJJ celebrated Probation and Parole Officer's Week by having a special luncheon. **RM Angela Koenig** and the supervisors provided lunch for all the officers. It is always a great time for everyone to be able to sit down and eat together.

Congratulations

Youth **Bart R.** graduated from the Youth Challenge Program in July. His Probation Officer is **Summer Ferreira**.

Youth Go Scuba Diving in the Atlantic Ocean

Two students, **Michael D.** and **Clarence R.** from AMIkids Donaldsonville took part in the AMIkids, Inc. Dive Invitational in July in Florida City, Florida.

To prepare for the adventure, the students took open water scuba diving classes taught by AMIkids, Inc. **Chief Executive Officer O.B. Stander** and **Assistant to the Chief Helen Sheaves** both NAUI (National Association of Underwater Instructors) instructors.

AMIkids Donaldsonville's **Director of Operations Ed Queen** travelled with the students to the Florida event. "Aside from the benefits of traveling to a different state, flying on an airplane, seeing the ocean for the first time and meeting new people, our students returned from diving with strengthened leg and arm muscles, improved suppleness in the feet, skilled coordination and concentration, refreshed minds, renewed respiratory systems, and a better view of the meaning of life," Queen said.

This scuba diving opportunity was funded by a grant from retired **Judge Curtis and Mrs. Louise Calloway** of Baton Rouge. Judge Calloway became a NAUI Open Water Certified Diver in 2009.



Michael D., Clarence R. and Helen Sheaves, NAUI Instructor get ready for their 50ft decent.



Michael D. makes a stride entry into the Atlantic Ocean geared up and ready. This was the first dive of the trip.

Story aired on NBC Miami: Olympic Diver Goes Scuba Diving with Troubled Teens



O..

Olympic diver **Sara Hildebrand** got a lesson from teenagers in trouble with the law. Hildebrand partnered with Team USA and BP as part of a program that serves 9,000 teens in the juvenile justice system in nine states.

And recently she dove into Biscayne Bay with 17-year-old Clarence, something the teen never thought he'd be doing. The two went scuba diving.

"It's a whole other world," he said about his venture under the sea.

The teen improved his grades and his attitude, earning a chance to get his open water diver's certification.

After meeting Hildebrand, Clarence now wants a professional underwater diving career. He plans to finish high school and go to college.

Hildebrand wanted Clarence and other teens to know "dreams do come true."

Tallulah Regional Office

P&P Week Celebrated

Tallulah OJJ celebrated PPO Week with an activity every day. The week started Monday with a gift placed on each PPO's desk. Tuesday we enjoyed a breakfast casserole with juice. Wednesday there was lunch with spaghetti, salad and bread. Thursday saw a

beautiful breakfast of blueberry waffles, sausage and juice. The week ended on Friday with presentation of certificates of appreciation.

Youth Expresses Feelings via Poetry

PPO Jena McCattry continues to encourage youth **Michael C.** to write out his feelings. He gave her this poem.

Life's Tough

Life's tough when there's a fuss
 Life's tough when people cuss
 Life's tough when you're scared
 Life's tough when there's no one there
 So look down upon me
 Like the little boy I seem to be
 But if you know that I am 16
 I hope you leave it at that and let it be
 So like I said life's tough
 Be smart don't get rough
 So don't do a crime
 If you ain't got time
 Cause life's tough and I ain't lying.
 --Michael C.

Swanson Center for Youth

SCY Recommended for ACA Accreditation

SCY will be recommended for accreditation by ACA after an exhaustive audit that found us in 100 percent compliance on 38 mandatory standards and 97.45 percent compliant on 329 non-mandatory standards. Staff must still appear before the ACA Commission on Accreditation for Corrections who will make the final award of reaccreditation at the annual conference. Accreditation is valid for three years. We were last re-accredited in 2000, when we achieved 96.9 percent compliance.

The 38 mandatory and 329 non-mandatory standards cover treatment, safety, medical and

mental health care, as well as environmental factors.

In announcing their findings to the staff, ACA auditors said they found the campus to be well kept and maintained, and they interviewed youth, who said they are satisfied with the services. One of the auditors had participated in the last ACA audit in 2000, and said the transition from a correctional model to a therapeutic environment is very apparent.

On The Road

By Program Manager Jan James, LMSW

The Swanson Team went on the road with their brightest and best youth. They rewarded the youth who achieved academic excellence for the best six weeks and who are working the LAMOD process to its fullest.

The youth have been studying Louisiana history and what better way to reward them than a trip to the State Capitol. The staff and youth first stopped off at the Old Capitol where they stepped back into time and felt the ghost of **Governor Huey P. Long**. It is said if we close our eyes and we listen very quietly we could hear his speeches to the Louisiana legislators. We saw a gun displayed that was alleged to have been used to kill former Governor Huey P. Long. Our guide told us the Old State Capitol was abandoned to make way for the New State Capitol in 1932.

Then back on the road again to the "new" State Capitol. We climbed the 48 state steps plus the addition two steps installed when Alaska and Hawaii became states. We went to the senate and house chambers and our guide told us how a bill proceeds. We then went to the hallway where former Governor Huey P. Long was shot, and saw a bullet that was lodged in a pole.

We then went up to the very top of the Capitol to the observation deck, and saw the most amazing view.



(photo, left) We watched a barge go down the Mississippi River. Some of the youth said they had never even seen the Mississippi River. Of course this was a picture moment and we took pictures of our team looking

at the view. We even had **Director Carolyn Atkins** at the top and she said she was not very fond of heights -- we can say she was a trooper.

Then back on the road to Towne Center in Baton Rouge, where we had the best burgers that any of us has ever eaten, and then the long journey home.

When the weather is a little cooler the Swanson Team will be on the road again this fall. We will be examining another piece of history. Most of all we want to thank all who came out and supported us while on the road. See you on the road.

Ernest Gaines Award Winner Visits Bookstore

One student from each facility recently won the first annual Ernest Gaines Award for a student who is an improved reader and has shown a distinct gain in the area of reading.

Swanson's winner was **Broderick G.** Each winner received a gift card to a bookstore. Broderick was a member of the tour group that recently visited the State Capitol. **Director of Education Kim Mims** escorted him on a visit to Barnes and Nobles Bookstore to redeem his gift card. He chose several books by his favorite mystery author, James Patterson.



Broderick G. and Director of Education Kim Mims at Barnes and Nobles bookstore.



SCY Program Manager Jan James' niece, Christina Hayward, dancing in the recent Miss Louisiana pageant.

Shreveport Regional Office

P&P Week Observed

Shreveport OJJ recognized Probation & Parole week by participating in daily activities. A full week of activities was planned. Monday: **PS Jan Crain** provided breakfast for everyone in the office. Tuesday provider **John Gianforte** sent a wonderful "goodie" basket to the office. On Wednesday team building activities included bowling and grilled hamburgers. Thursday PPOs enjoyed another wonderful breakfast during the monthly staff meeting. On Friday **RM Kristi Martin** distributed bags of goodies to PPOs with items given by our local providers.

Congratulations

Employee of the Month was **PPO Holly Black**. Holly was recognized for being a hard worker and a great asset to the office.

Welcome Aboard

Shreveport OJJ would like to welcome **PPO Matthew Carter**.

Training and Development

RM Kristi Martin continues to participate in weekly meetings of the CSoC work groups.

PPS Mitchell Lane and several PPOs participated in reclassification staffings for youth at Swanson.

After hours curfew checks were conducted during the month of July under the supervision of **PPS Steve Martino** and **PPS Guy May**.

New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office

A Special Happy Birthday to Administrative Assistant Romona Julian



I celebrated my 74th birthday with all of my OJJ friends and I was very appreciative of all their birthday congratulations.

I realize that 74 years is an unusual age to be a working girl, but I couldn't imagine my life any other way. I came to OJJ after having taken an early retirement from a shipyard company. Since I worked there 14 years or so, I was so apprehensive about leaving my friends—we were all like family. But I dug in and resigned myself to the fact that I would certainly get another job.

I was advised to test with Louisiana State Civil Service. After passing that test I received an invitation to apply with the Office of Juvenile Justice and I came for an interview. There I met the most wonderful people one could imagine—friendly, courteous and personable – who put me at ease.

When the interviewers (**Angela Koenig** being one), began telling me exactly what OJJ was about, I immediately was interested. I had no idea there was a whole sector dedicated to getting our youth back on track! I went home and hoped I would be called back; I was, and I was so elated that I would begin my tenure with these wonderful people.

I celebrated 11 years here in April. Everyone here is a personal friend and those in my clerical department are like my sisters—we are there for each other. The Probation Officers for whom we work are undoubtedly some of the finest people I have ever known. I'm proud to be part of this organization and hope to continue as long as I feel I can and as long as God sees fit.

OJJ Sons on the Road to Success

PPO3 Milton L. Crosby, Jr. reports that by God's goodness, his sons, the Crosby brothers, are doing well after graduation. **Milton, right**, is working for Fresenius Medical



Care, a Fortune 500 company, and **Marcus, left**, attended his first summer session at Xavier University and earned a 3.0 GPA.



Roses from Jan James' garden.

Congratulations

PPO2 Kimberly Dickerson is happy to announce that youth **A. S.** earned her GED while in non-secure placement.

Summer Group Makes a Difference in Youths' Lives

Staff from OJJ and the Jefferson Parish Human Services Authority (JPHSA) are making a difference in our youths' lives. **Nikia Magee**, a social worker with JPHSA, and OJJ **Social Worker Roxann Tuircuit, LMSW**, conducted an eight week summer group for Region One focusing on an array of topics, including decision making, managing stress and anger, family communication, healthy relationships, etc. This educational group proved to be engaging and knowledgeable for our youth. The youths had a blast for eight weeks as we closed out with a post test, certificates and pizza for all. Thank you to Nikia Magee for the partnership with OJJ.

Christmas in July Kick OFF

A Christmas in July event was coordinated by **Social Worker Roxann Tuircuit** to get a head start in collecting gifts for youth in our community to help ease the stress of the holidays for our families. Families will also receive literature entitled The Real Meaning of Christmas. Thank you to our **Regional Manager Kelly Clement** and the staff for always supporting community projects.



Dreams Really Do Come True!

Adm. Coordinator 2 Karen Ragan is probably singer Barry Manilow's biggest fan. In June Karen won an all expense paid trip to Las Vegas. The trip included 2 round trip airline tickets, 2 nights, 3 days stay at the Paris Hotel and Casino Las Vegas, meals and 2 tickets to see Barry's show - on her birthday.

Karen's **daughter Holli** was the "lucky" chosen one to take the trip with her. We asked Holli how she felt about this trip and her response was, "I might as well go and see the man that my mother made me listen to while I was growing up."

When we asked Karen to show us pictures of her trip, she was all too willing to share. She adds that she will show you, too, if you want to see them. (The videos, too!)

Congratulations Karen!



Karen Ragan, above and below, with Barry, and daughter Holli.



Natchitoches Regional Office

Congratulations



Employee of the Month was Magen Smith, Transport Officer

P&P Week Observed

Natchitoches OJJ staff enjoyed a barbecue lunch with all the trimmings.

Success Stories for our Girls

The following girls earned their GEDs while housed at the Ware Female Intensive Residential Program: **Alexis S., Vinecia N., Jade G., Keryn S., Erin D.** (released) and **Brittany R.** (released). Also, **Vinecia N., Keryn S.** and **Kristin C.** are applying to attend Bossier Parish Community College.

Girls in residential programs must progress through the Youth Stages of Development. These are:

Stage 1: Orientation: Learning and Safety

Stage 2: Emerging: Self Awareness

Stage 3: Adaptation: Applying Skills

Stage 4: Transformation: Role Model and Leadership

For each stage of development, there are certain expectations that youth are expected to meet. As the youth advance through the stages, the expectations cumulatively increase. For example, whatever the youth must do in Stage 1, they must also do in Stage 2, plus additional expectations.

Each month youth who have earned stage 3 and 4 and consistently follow expectations have the privilege of going on outings. Stage 3 youth are allowed one outing and stage 4 youth have two outings.

In July we escorted stage 3 and 4 youth **Vinecia N., Olivia P., Courtney D., Ketría M. and Jade G.** to the alligator farm in Natchitoches.

Also in July, we escorted stage 4 youth **Vinecia N.** to the hair salon and took her out to eat.

Youth Activities

Girls in Cottage 1 at the Ware Female Intensive Residential Program participated in making cards for Veterans Day: **Alexis S., Courtney D., Oliva P. and Keryn S.**

Four youth housed at Cane River Children's Services just returned from the annual "Across America" trip. The four residents, who were carefully chosen, exemplify qualities and behaviors that warrant the privilege. One of those who was chosen was OJJ resident **Rachel R.** The purpose of the trip was to provide an opportunity for cultural exposure, educational enrichment and personal development gained through the experience of travel. The trip is awarded based on program progression and personal improvement.

The trip included travels through Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. The youth visited many educational and historical sites including the Genghis Khan exhibit at Irving Arts Center, Jousting Dinner Theater, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, Stockyards City, Route 66 sites, Chickasaw Indian Interactive Museum, Discovery Land Western Musical Theater, Fort Smith National Historic Site, the Great Passion Play, Thorncrown Chapel, Ozark National Forest and Hot Springs National Park. The girls traveled in an agency van and slept in a camper with administrative staff

members **Jennifer Johnson Karle** and **Angie Courville** chaperoning.

Monroe Regional Office

P&P Week Celebrated in Style

Monroe OJJ celebrated P&P Appreciation Week in July. **RM Patty Newman, PPS Orlando Davis, PPS Linda Williams, PPS Karl Wallace, PPS Larry Tolbird and PPS Gail Wilson** provided breakfast, a cookout, and an ice cream party, among other events.

On Monday we had beignets, coffee and juice. Tuesday, each officer received personalized note pads. On Wednesday, we enjoyed a hamburger/hotdog lunch with chips and dessert. **PPS Karl Wallace** and **PPS Orlando Davis** grilled hamburgers and hotdogs. On Thursday, there was a secret contest with certificates awarded for "Felix" and "Oscar" - the neatest and messiest offices. First place "Felix" went to **PPO2 Jeremy Fox**, with **PPO1 Valerie Nordstrom** as runner-up. First place "Oscar" went to **PPO3 Joel McNair**, with **PPO3 Patrick Cooper** as runner-up (no surprises there!). On Friday we played bingo, with prizes, and had an ice cream party.

We think the probation officers at Monroe OJJ are the best in the state. All of our supervisory staff is proud of the work they do. **Thank you, Y'all!**



**PPO Garner
Brass -
Monroe OJJ
Bingo
champion.**



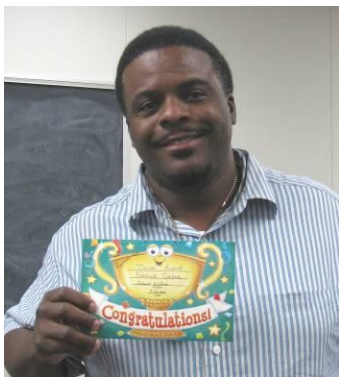
First Place "Felix" Award was awarded to PPO2 Jeremy Fox.



Runner-up "Felix" Award goes to PPO1 Valerie Nordstrom.



First Place "Oscar" Award is awarded to PPO3 Joel McNail.



Runner-up "Oscar" Award goes to PPO3 Patrick Cooper.



PPS Karl Wallace and PPS Orlando Davis grilling hamburgers and hotdogs for the office.



PPO Garner Brass enjoys a hot dog during P&P Appreciation Week



PPO3 David McMillan caught with his hand in the cookie jar.

Safety Meeting Features Healthy Lifestyle

Monroe OJJ's quarterly safety meeting was conducted by **Crystal Fox, wife of PPO2 Jeremy Fox**. Crystal talked to us about "Life Produces Life," healthy living and eating. Crystal Fox is a licensed and registered dietitian. We really appreciated her presentation, and most of us are trying to follow her good advice.

Lake Charles Regional Office

P&P Week Celebrated in a Big Way

We celebrated **Probation & Parole Appreciation Week** - best efforts were made to communicate appreciation to our officers who work so hard.

On Monday, **PPS Ken Vidrine** brought breakfast klatches and doughnuts as an expression of his appreciation for all the hard work of the PPOs. The breakfast was greatly appreciated!

At the Tuesday morning staff meeting, we decided that we would celebrate in early August by having a team-building day (volleyball) on the beach of I-10.

On Wednesday **PPO Monet Newman** brought doughnuts for breakfast. **PPS Melissa Cross** prepared an ice cream sandwich dessert, with "OJJ" written in Magic Shell chocolate. The treats did not last more than one day!

An appreciation card to the group was left with the dessert and Melissa recognized each member of her unit with a card describing special, notable things appreciated about each one of them and how those things are great contributions to the unit.



*Ice cream sandwich
dessert*

On Thursday, Melissa presented each probation officer with an Oreo cookie bouquet, with each cookie containing messages such as "All Star," "#1" and the hand with a #1 finger. The Oreo flowers were planted in a bed of Tootsie Rolls. Each had a personalized card.



cookie bouquets

Left and below: Oreo



Staff loved the Oreo cookie bouquets, which earned Melissa the nicknames "Betty Crocker" and "Wonder Woman" (since her airline pilot husband is gone from home a lot, leaving her at home with two baby boys who just celebrated their 1st and 3rd birthdays.)

On Friday, **Adm. Coordinator 3 Erline Pierce** brought doughnuts for breakfast. The supervisory team presented each officer with a certificate to recognize their service to OJJ families. **PPS Melissa Cross** baked a homemade chocolate cake, with chocolate icing (an office favorite!), and decorated it with the OJJ logo and colorful plastic toy handcuffs. Melissa also presented each officer with a personalized bottle of hand sanitizer and decorative ribbon in appreciation of those who serve in the field of "PREVENTION."



Above: Chocolate cake M&Ms. Below: personalized hand sanitizer; certificate of appreciation.



Kudos

PPO 2 Hollie Comeaux was recognized for excellent service to one of her clients who was in crisis. Hollie tried to get a doctor's appointment for a youth who expressed suicidal ideations and showed symptoms of depression. The local doctor's office could not see him. Hollie communicated the seriousness to the doctor's office, which made accommodations and "worked the child in."

We recognize Hollie for doing whatever is necessary to get needed services for our youth.

PPO Fred Fontenot received both verbal and written kudos for the amount of time, effort, and dedication shown in his new role as Office Transport Coordinator. Many staff expressed that Fred is creating "big shoes to fill," if not impossible to fill, as this role will rotate every three months, according to a new schedule.

PPO Monet Newman graciously hosted our office's first after-hours social in years. **PPO Ronald Gilchrist** is given credit for his persistence to get everyone together, for making sure everyone was notified, and for encouraging participation. **PPO Fred Fontenot** was on vacation, but still attended when he got news of the social. **PPO Rebecca Harmon**, **PPO Monet Newman** and **PPS Melissa Cross** each prepared party food. We played games, visited, and ate. Only rules – no shop talk - just enjoy each other – and that we did. **Transport Officer Corey Harmon** kept us accountable for "no shop talk." We have vowed to try to plan in advance, so more can attend, and to do it more often.

PPO Alexis Heflin was complimented on her Motivational Interviewing techniques in the case of client **T.G.** Alexis helped her come to the conclusion that running away from placement is not helping her get closer to successful completion of OJJ responsibilities. Alexis visited the youth at Harbour House shelter as she was threatening to run away (again). Harbour House staff witnessed Alexis' discussion with the youth, and many of them asked Alexis to speak to their own children. Alexis' visit was successful - she motivated T.G. to remain in the Shelter overnight.

PPO Ronald Gilchrist brought a unique perspective to two staffings in which he participated in **PPS Melissa Cross's** unit. His involvement changed the preliminary ideas and expectations of the staffing recommendations in both cases. Ronald

presented from the youth's perspective and need to be heard; Ronald encouraged the PPO assigned to this case to establish a bond first and form trust before utilizing detention/contempt for consequences. He felt that being too harsh, too soon, may forever impair that relationship.

Program Specialist Karli Pullard recognized **PPO Alexis Heflin** and **PPO Monet Newman** for their participation, attention to detail, and great assistance in the Boys Village Quality Assurance Audit.

PPS Ken Vidrine completed Glock transition school, and he is prepared to qualify with his new weapon. Ken has been complimented on being a great shot and he has an even better "secret weapon" – he does not look the part! He is a kind and nurturing man – who is also an excellent marksman.

RM Ann Vick is thrilled about the opening of the Sulphur location of the Methodist Children's Home. The first residents were placed in late July and Ann has asked us to give this facility great support while staff are being trained and getting accustomed to our kids.

Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office

P&P Week Celebrated

Lafayette OJJ celebrated Probation & Parole Officers' Week in style. The officers were allowed to dress casually on Monday and Wednesday, and were treated to breakfast by the supervisors at the regional staff meeting. Drawings were held at the staff meeting for door prizes, and **PPOs Cassandra Brown, Bret Gould** and **Lakaisha Lewis** walked away with some very nice gift baskets.



From left: PPOs Lakaisha Lewis, Bret Gould and Cassandra Brown

On Monday **RM Susan Miller** and the supervisors prepared candy packs (chocolate, mixed candies and brownies) for the PPOs, along with thank you/appreciation cards.

On Tuesday, Susan and the Supervisors prepared breakfast for staff to eat during our monthly staff meeting. (But, did they sing?) They also had a grab bag activity during which staff pulled for three gift baskets that we purchased. All staff received something from the drawing, but three prizes were special.

On Wednesday our providers Cadence and AMIkids remembered our officers with some treats.

On Thursday PPOs received another gift bag with items from RM Susan and the Supervisors, and our local MST provider.

On Friday Lafayette OJJ had a picnic in the park, as the finale to Probation & Parole Officers' Appreciation Week. A day of fun and games was held at Girard Park, with lunch, featuring burgers grilled by **Chef/PPS Joey Denais**. The individual units competed against each other in events such as kickball, volleyball, washer-toss, and tug-of-war, and **PPS Tracy Flores'** unit was declared the victors. The officers then competed against the supervisors in tug-of-war, with the officers triumphant. Even though there was a little

rain, it did not put a damper on the wonderful time the officers were treated to.



Above and left are photos from our day at the park.



Congratulations

PPOs Tracy Flores and **Chris Potier** were promoted to PPSs. **RM Susan Miller** said, "Tracy and Chris have been an asset to this office as Probation Officers and will continue to do so as supervisors. I look forward to their leadership."

PPS Joey Denais acknowledged the work and accomplishments of **PPO Chase Cappel**. One of Chase's clients, **Brittany R.**, and her parent indicated that Chase is the reason she was successful while in her custody placement, and now on parole. Both Brittany and her mother have now agreed to participate in the Parent Empowerment Network. Joey also indicated that Chase is the "go to" person in

his unit when staff needs to know information about the court in St. Martin Parish.

Community Activities

PPOs Justin Beasley and **Deacon Jones** recently volunteered for a fundraising event for the Acadiana Center for the Arts, which provides arts education and classes for the community. These services include free programs for youth in the community.

Above and Beyond

PPO Jody Osmer recently attended the Youth Challenge Program graduation of one of his clients in Shreveport. It was a long drive, but Jody's show of support for his client goes above and beyond!

On a Friday, after working all day and having gone home for the weekend, **PPO George Hebert** received a phone call from a client who said that she and her sister were having a dispute. As George lived nearby, he decided to go to the home and work with the family to settle the dispute and resolve the conflict. George reports things are back on track.

Jetson Center for Youth

Students Make Great Academic Gains At Scenic Alternative High School

Students at Scenic Alternative High School made great academic gains during the 2010-2011 school year, based on results of the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE):

- 58 students took the post TABE test.
- of these students, 73% showed gains in reading. The reading gains ranged from .1 to 6.5 grade levels. The average gain was 2.2 grade levels.
- 67% of the students showed gains in language arts. The language arts gains ranged from .2 to 7.8 grade levels. The average gain was 2.5 grade levels.
- 74% of the students showed gains in math. The math gains ranged from .2

to 3.7 grade levels. The average gain was 1.3 grade levels.

These academic gains can be attributed to several factors. An important factor is that most of the students attend school daily, which many were not doing in their communities. Most of the students report they had been either suspended or expelled from school. Many of the students were two or more grade levels below their age group.

A second factor for academic success is the type of instruction provided by the teachers and aides. The students are given assignments based on their instructional level. This gives the students an immediate sense of academic success. It elevates their attitude toward learning. Their gaps in skills begin to close and they are able to make rapid academic improvements.

A third factor is provision of specialized services by Special School District. SSD teachers provide services utilizing an inclusion model, meaning that the special education teacher and the regular teacher work together in the classroom to teach all students.

A fourth factor is the relationship between students and staff. When dorm leaders, counselors and juvenile justice specialists are in the classrooms, interaction between students and the teachers improve. Mutual respect for others is evident. This atmosphere makes for a good learning environment.

A fifth factor is the quality of professional development available to the teaching staff. Education staff attend in-state and out-of-state conferences, as well as on-site training by consultants. When teachers and staff attend conferences, upon return they must present information on what they learned to the faculty. A well-trained staff is a more productive, informed staff.

Another factor and the most important factor is the students' desire to work toward being promoted to a higher grade, to make better grades on their report cards, to earn a GED or

continue to earn Carnegie units. Most of the students thrive on praise and encouragement from the teachers and principal on a daily basis. Some students complain about school, but they still attempt to complete assignments and they still want to be successful. The staff encourages them along the way.

The Stop, Drop and Read program is a consistent part of the weekly activities. This school year, all school personnel will read the same book, "A Dream Fulfilled: The Story of Barack Obama."

Scenic Alternative High School could not thrive without the dedicated work of the teachers, principal, entire staff, Facility Director, and most of all, the efforts of the students. To all, a HUGE THANKS!

Hammond Regional Office

P&P Week Celebrated

The probation officers were recognized during P&P Week with a luncheon provided by the supervisors and **RM Sue Larisey**. The PPOs were also presented with personalized thank you cards in appreciation for all they do.

SUPERSTAR!

PPO2 Jenna Hill is the Hammond Superstar for July. She was recognized by **PPO3 Kasey Wall** for helping place and arrange transport for a non-secure case while she was in a CPTP class.

Training

At our monthly staff meeting, **Safety Officer Dana May** presented a safety topic on "Summer Heat Safety." Staff also completed a PREA refresher, received training on the Americans with Disabilities Act, use of office equipment, and reviewed the revised OJJ policies that were distributed since our last staff meeting.

Our Training Advisory Committee and Safety Committee held its quarterly meeting in July.

Models for Change/NCC Partnership Update

Hammond OJJ has partnered with Northshore Community College and the MacArthur Foundation to create a pilot educational model for adjudicated youth in the OJJ Hammond region. This project will create an individual career pathway for each youth, resulting in attainment of skills set (and including a GED if needed) needed to become a productive member of the workforce, as well as the development of social and customer service skills needed to maintain a job and function successfully in society.

There were four focus group meetings where youth and their parents were invited to hear a presentation regarding concentrations offered through the technical colleges as well as admission processes, requirements, and student financial aid.

Ten youth will be chosen as candidates to complete a course of study and obtain their GED, if needed. These ten youth will receive additional funds through the grant to use for transportation, or any other need, to help them succeed in this educational opportunity.

The project coordinator will work with these 10 youth by providing assistance in completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) as well as one-on-one meetings with the project coordinator to design a career path that will include an occupational career plan. The plan will include possible or existing challenges, solutions to challenges, relationship building and character building.

The probation officers will provide a system of support to assist the youth throughout this educational process. In an effort to remove as many barriers as possible, we will have a staff person from Southeastern Louisiana

University (SLU) come to the Hammond office and assist the youth and parents in completing the FAFSA. How often does that happen! We will keep everyone posted as we move forward with this initiative.

Central Office

We've Been Published!

Chief of Operations

Ellyn Toney authored an article that was published in the June/July issue of *Corrections Today*, the official publication of



ACA. Headlined "PREA Raises the Bar in Juvenile Corrections," the article discusses the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) and outlines strategies that OJJ has put into practice to comply with the act's requirements. Recognizing that juvenile corrections presents a unique set of challenges, Ellyn stressed that "PREA has been the catalyst for juvenile caregivers to increase their knowledge of adolescent sexual development, to put mechanisms into place to identify and treat sexual trauma, and to educate youth in healthy sexuality, including their right to live free of victimization."

HR Specialist

Shenikka Ferguson was honored with a bridal shower, to celebrate her marriage to **Terry Matthews**. They were married in an evening ceremony July 30th.



OJJ Daughter Serves as Cox Sports Reporter

Dr. Livers' assistant **Nita Franklin-Shanklin's** daughter **Kashanna Bradford** will be a sports announcer for the Cox4 Game of the Week shows this fall. Kashanna will serve as sideline reporter in the Acadiana region.



The Cox4 Game of the Week will be broadcast live with a 6:30 p.m. pre-game show, followed by a 7 p.m. kick off, and will replay on Cox4 at 10:30 p.m. on Fridays, 9:30 a.m. on Saturdays, and 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Sundays. The pre-game show will feature interviews with school leaders, local elected officials and community leaders from across Southeast Louisiana.

OJJ Sons are National Track Stars

Administrative Assistant Shaeki Shanklin's two sons recently participated in the AAU National Championship in Orlando, Florida at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at Walt Disney World Resort. The event was aired live on ESPN and online.



Burnell Williams, III, age 11, ranked in the top 8 nationwide in his age group (midget) in two running events. Burnell's relay team placed 3rd in the finals. Burnell went on to participate in the Junior Olympics Games in New Orleans.

Congratulations to Burnell on a job well done! Now it's back to the books for the 6th grader at Scotlandville Pre-Engineering Magnet Academy.

Markell Harris, age 7, ranked in the top 8 nationwide in his age group (primary) in two running events. He also went on to participate in the Junior Olympic Games in New Orleans.

Congratulations, Markell, for your accomplishments. Markell is in 3rd grade at Brownsfield Elementary Magnet School.



OJJ Daughter Receives Scholarship

Program Specialist Yezette White's daughter, **Xzania White** has been awarded an \$11,000 scholarship at Howard University to participate in research as she completes her senior year in her area of study (psychology). The scholarship was awarded by the Career Opportunities in Research (COR), funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH).



We Said Farewell to OMF Staff



Left, DASs Sean Hamilton and Carolyn Lewis serve lunch for central office staff.

The executive team planned and served a luncheon to recognize members of the OMF staff who recently transferred to DPS. **Dr.**

Mary Livers thanked the staff who were leaving for their contributions to OJJ and for handling the business duties and IT technical support with diligence and dedication. **Undersecretary Connie Percell**, **HR Director Gwendolyn Jones** and **IT Director Vanessa Tom** each thanked their staff members who were transferring. Many other members of the central office team wished their colleagues fond farewell.

Bridge City Center for Youth

Youth Conference and Parent Empowerment Network Program Conducted

BCCY conducted its first Youth Conference and Parent Empowerment Network program in July, with nine guest speakers who led the sessions. **Youth Roberto V.** opened the program with a prayer. **Director Joseph Powe** and **Family Liaison Donna Bowie** welcomed participants, and **Rev. Torin Sanders** held everyone's interest during the introductions/occasion. **Gregory Fortenberry's** (of Boystown) rendition of "He Saw The Best in Me" almost brought the house to tears. Keynote speaker was **Hakim Kashif**, Mentor/Interventionist.

The empowerment sessions included:

Parents

Effective Communications – **James Evans, LCSW**, and **August Collins**, Director of Youth Advocacy, Youth Empowerment Project

Youth

How to Study & Take Tests – **Steven Henry**, 6th Baptist Church

Getting Closer to God – **Robert Rimmer**, volunteer with BCCY

Being a Leader – **Gregory Fortenberry**, Youth Care-Resident (Boystown)

Be Your Own Boss – **Percy Marchand**, owner of NOLA Copy & Print Co.

Best Jobs for the 21st Century – **Bryan Moore**, Director of JOB1

Forgiveness & Conflict Resolution – **Alvin Anderson, LCSW**, 6th Baptist Church



Above and below: Parents engaged in a session at the Empowerment Network program.



Parents were engaged in the sessions, asking questions that would help to enhance their relationships with their sons. They have already begun asking when the next conference will be held. Youth participated in the sessions by raising their hands to ask and answer questions posed by speakers, and the anticipation on their faces could only be captured as "Kodak moments."

Youth and their family, our prestigious guests and staff members had a chance to sit together and enjoy a delicious meal catered by BCCY's own Dining Hall staff.

Two door prizes were given. One of the winners, **mother of Youth Christopher T.**, said that she has never won anything before in her life.

Thanks to all of the Directors, special guests, **Dr. Torin Sanders, Family Liaison Donna Bowie**, and the behind-the-scenes staff who helped to make these event so successful. The program was a celebration of what is to come for Bridge City Center for Youth.



Speakers at the Parent Empowerment program included, from left, Bryan Moore, James Evans, Alvin Anderson, Steven Henry, OJJ Family Liaison Donna Bowie, Pastor Torin Sanders, Hakim Kashif and Robert Rimmer.

First Annual “Fun Day Blowout”

BCCY hosted the First Annual “*Fun Day Blowout*” in July, to show appreciation to the youth who embrace and model LAMOD daily. The day’s events began with the youth engaging in field events such as milk throw, tug-of-war, and frisbee throw, just to name a few. The winners of these events were given prizes varying from photo albums to hygiene products. The field events went over well but the boys truly enjoyed the 22 foot water slide. Seeing the youth slipping and sliding was a fresh reminder that the youth we work with every day still have a little kid inside of them.

Also, there was a dunking booth. Yes, a dunking booth, and special thanks to our English instructor, Christopher Mayes, for volunteering. Mr. Mayes was truly a sport as staff and youth made countless efforts to tip him off into the water.

The “*Fun Day Blowout*” would have not been complete without great food and music. So to add to the fun, the youth were served

barbequed hotdogs and hamburgers, watermelon, popcorn and snowballs. While many ate as much as their hearts desired, others sat back and bobbed their heads to the music that the DJ played. It was evident that the youth enjoyed themselves by the smiles of their faces.

Special Thanks to all employees from all departments that pitched in to make our 1st Annual “*Fun Day Blowout*” a huge success.



English instructor Christopher Mayes “manned” the dunking booth. Below, youth Joseph W. enjoyed the water slide.



Top Hat, the goose, taking a drink in Jan James’ backyard pond.

Congratulations



BCCY would like to proudly congratulate **Tyler D.** for a job well done on successfully receiving his General Education Diploma. Tyler is a 17 year old from Livingston Parish. Tyler plans to further his education when he is released.



Congratulations to **Ms. Eddie Newsome**, Administrative Program Specialist A. Eddie was recently accepted into the Doctoral Program at Colorado Tech University in Colorado Springs. Her course of study is management with a concentration in organizational development and change. Eddie has been employed with BCCY for the past five years and has 23 years of previous state service.

Resource Room Opens

BCCY announces the grand opening of its new Resource Room. It developed and organized by **Eddie Newsome** and **Janet Benn** to give the employees a reliable source in which to retrieve pertinent employment information (i.e. retrieve payroll stubs from LEO, access to a public computer, policy and procedure manuals, updated information on activities at BCCY, and access to the Office of Juvenile Justice Intranet). Employees will have access to the room 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Bridge City Youth Volunteer at Local Church Summer Camp

As we continue to prepare our youth to transition back into the community, we understand the importance of allowing them to participate in restorative justice projects. In July, **Youths Arnold A., Marcus A., Kelzon**

C. and Roberto V. volunteered at Mount Hermon Baptist Church summer camp.

Upon arrival at the church, the youth met with the camp coordinator to discuss the expectations. They were advised they would be responsible for setting up an obstacle course for the Pre K- 1st grade campers. The camp coordinator provided them with jump ropes, water rafts, hula hoops, water missiles, and cones, and sent them on their mission.

The youth discussed how to coordinate the obstacle course to include the materials provided and assure that the campers would be able to successfully complete the course. The youth enjoyed sharing their ideas as they worked as a team to set up the obstacle course. Upon completing the set-up, the youth served lunch to the campers. The campers were intrigued with the youths' stature and looked up to them with admiration in their eyes as they served sandwiches, fruit, and juice.



Above, Youths Marcus A. and Allen A. serve the campers lunch. Below, Youths Kelzon C. and Roberto V. engage with campers during obstacle course.



Once the campers completed their lunch they were off to the obstacle course. Our youth

did an exceptional job of facilitating the obstacle course. They explained to the campers how to complete each station. As the campers moved from one station to another, trying to jump rope and throw hula hoops on a cone, our youth were actively engaged and cheering them on. The experience was rewarding for our youth and they exhibited extraordinary team work and leadership skills.

Mock Trial Held at BCCY

In July, BCCY held its second mock trial. Our welcome guests were **Judge Tracey Flemings-Davillier** of the Orleans Parish Juvenile Court, accompanied by her assistant **Toyin Idewu**, law clerk **Jessica Coalter**, and student interns **Ashley R. Jones**, **Krysten Blair** and **Domnique Dickerson**.

A campus tour was conducted for the law interns before the start of the mock trial. Having a tour and hosting the mock trial gave the Loyola University law students the opportunity to better understand everyday activities of youth who were adjudicated to intensive residential care. They also left with more insight on how each youth in our care is immersed in an individualized treatment plan.

The interns learned that treatment plans are intended to fortify each youth with effective coping and decision-making skills. When utilized upon re-entering the community, those acquired skills will enable our youth to become productive, law-abiding citizens.

The mock trial served a dual role, as it provided our youth with the opportunity to better comprehend the roles played by judges, defense attorneys, prosecuting attorneys and juries during trials. The youth also have a better understanding on how and why judges make guilty or not guilty decisions during trials.

Baton Rouge Regional Office

P&P Week Observed

Baton Rouge OJJ took time to recognize the hardest working group of people in America, Juvenile Probation and Parole Officers! In July we celebrated Probation and Parole Officers' Week by having a breakfast, an ice cream gala, and a luncheon on Friday. And boy we deserved it! "As PPOs for juveniles we end up being so much more to the families we serve," said **RM Michelle Thomas**. "I often hear our officers counseling youth, mentoring them, and making sure that they have basic necessities for school or just day-to-day living. I am proud to be among a group of such caring and amazing professionals. Thanks to the great officers in the Baton Rouge office for the awesome work they do every day to meet the mission!"

Congratulations

Employee of the Month
is **PPO Brandon Woods**.

Brandon was selected by his coworkers because he is a true gentleman, with an old soul. Brandon works hard to give the youth in his area a big brother/father figure.

He is always willing to lend a helping hand or give a stern "talking to" when needed. Brandon shows great integrity and compassion in his work.



You're Looking Good

On a July Saturday, **RM Michelle Thomas**, **SSC Jennifer Anderson**, **PPO Courtney Dickerson**, **PPO Yolonda Latimer**, **PPO Leslie Jones** and **PPO Keondra Riley** participated in a back to school/health fair (B2S) sponsored by **Mayor-President Kip Holden**, **District 10 Councilwoman Tara Wicker**, **State Representative Patricia**

Smith, and Abishur, Inc at the Dr. Leo S. Butler Community Center.

It was a wonderful experience to get out in the community we serve and just have fun! The kids were provided with free school supplies, haircuts, dental and vision screenings, and several motivational speakers including the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff's Office SCAT (special community anti-crime team) Team and LSU's own **Glenn "Big Baby" Davis**. Baton Rouge officers, we see you and you're looking good!



Left, youth learn proper dental care at the B2S event. Right, youth receive a vision screening.



At the B2S event are PPO Courtney Dickerson and her two daughters, PPO Yolonda Latimer, SSC Jennifer Anderson, PPO Keondra Riley, RM Michelle Thomas and PPO Leslie Jones.



EBR Sheriff's deputies speak with kids at the BsS event.

Alexandria Regional Office

P&P Week Observed

Alexandria OJJ held a fish fry for staff. All feasted and ate too much. Thanks to **RM Johnny Qualls** and **PPS John Baker** for bringing in their catch, and to **PPS Clay Dupuy** for bringing *more* fish and cooking red beans.



Staff enjoy the fish fry.

Newly hired **PPO1 Justin Guidry**, (in white shirt) takes part in the pre-assessment for the upcoming POST Academy.



RM Johnny Qualls along with **PPO2 Robert Harris**,

attended LA. Federation of Families Community Resource Fair. They provided information about our juvenile justice program to youth, parents, and other local vendors in the area.

We are *extremely proud* of **PPO2 Robert Harris**, who has placed 4th, (19.8%) losing 64 lbs. in his local church's weight loss program. Keep up the good work, Rob. Robert looks like a totally different person now. He is such an inspiration to all of us at Alexandria OJJ.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

The Inside Scoop...of OJJ is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

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Connie Percell, *Undersecretary*
Carolyn B. Lewis, *Dep. Asst. Secretary, Community Based Services*
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